

## Message Text

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12

ACTION EUR-12

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FM AMCONSUL FRANKFURT

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6440

AMEMBASSY BONN

INFO AMCONSUL BREMEN

AMCONSUL DUSSELDORF

AMCONSUL HAMBURG

AMCONSUL MUNICH

AMCONSUL STUTTGART

USMISSION BERLIN

USCINCEUR/POLADS

USAREUR/POLADS

USAFA/POLADS

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USCINCEUR, USAREUR, USAFE FOR POLADS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINT, GW

SUBJECT: SAARLAND FDP APPROVES COALITION DISCUSSIONS

REF : FRANKFURT 7794

1. AFTER MORE THAN FIVE HOURS OF HARD AND OFTEN  
ACRIMONIOUS DEBATE THE SAARLAND FDP CONVENTION ON  
DECEMBER 5 APPROVED THE LEADERSHIP RECOMMENDATION  
AUTHORIZING THE FDP GOVERNING BOARD (LANDESVORSTAND)  
AND THE LANDTAG FRAKTION TO ENTER INTO COALITION  
DISCUSSIONS WITH THE CDU TO GOVERN IN THE SAARLAND.  
IN THE SECRET BALLOT 243 OF THE 415 DELGATES  
PRESENT VOTED IN FAVOR OF THE RECOMMENDATION, 166 WERE  
OPPOSED AND THERE WERE SIX ABSTENTIONS.

2. A LAST MINUTE ATTEMPT TO MAKE THE FINAL DECISION

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ON A COALITION GOVERNMENT SUBJECT TO APPROVAL BY AN

EXTRAORDINARY PARTY CONVENTION TO BE CALLED FOR THAT PURPOSE WAS DEFEATED BY APPROXIMATELY THE SAME MARGIN IN A SHOW OF HANDS VOTE. THE FINAL RESOLUTION AS APPROVED AUTHORIZES THE FDP'S CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE TO DECIDE ON "THE POLITICAL CONSEQUENCES TO BE DRAWN FROM THE RESULTS OF THESE (I.E. COALITION) DISCUSSIONS". THUS UNLIKE LOWER SAXONY THE CENTRAL EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE AND NOT ANOTHER PARTY CONVENTION WILL MAKE THE FINAL DECISION FOLLOWING COALITION NEGOTIATIONS BETWEEN THE CDU AND THE FDP IN SAARBRUECKEN.

3. THE DEBATE PRECEDING APPROVAL OF THE LEADERSHIP'S RECOMMENDATION PITTED THE PRACTICAL POLITICIANS OF THE FDP AGAINST AN ASSORTMENT OF ADVOCATES OF IDEOLOGICAL PURITY, LEFT - WINGERS AND PARTICULARLY THE FDP'S YOUTH ORGANIZATION--THE DDJ OR "JUDOS" IF THE WORD "CREDIBILITY" WAS MENTIONED ONCE, IT MUST HAVE BEEN SPOKEN SEVERAL HUNDRED TIMES IN COURSE OF THE DISCUSSION. OPPONENTS OF THE COALITION CHARGED THAT AFTER ALL THAT HAS BEEN SAID AND DONE PREVIOUSLY THE PARTY'S "CREDIBILITY" WITH THE VOTER WOULD BE UNDERMINED IF THE FDP WERE NOW TO ENTER INTO A COALITION WITH THE CHRISTIAN DEMOCRATS. THE SUPPORTERS OF COALITION DISCUSSIONS ASSERTED THAT THE FDP'S "CREDIBILITY" COULD BE SERVED ONLY IF IT ACCEPTS THE REALITIES OF THE POLITICAL SITUATION AND THEREFORE TAKES THE DIFFICULT BUT NECESSARY STEPS TO EXERT SUCH POWER AS IT CAN BY JOINING THE SAARLAND GOVERNMENT RATHER THAN REMAIN IN STERILE OPPOSITION. FDP CHAIRMAN WERNER KLUMPP HAD HIS HANDS FULL TO PUT DOWN THE INCIPIENT REBELLION. THAT HE DID SO IS IN GOOD PART DUE TO HIS POLITICAL SKILL INCLUDING THE WELL CALCULATED WAY IN WHICH HE MANAGED TO CONVEY THE THREAT OF HIS OWN RESIGNATION WITHOUT EVER COMMITTING HIMSELF TO IT.

4. COMMENT: THE OUTCOME HAS ONCE AGAIN DEMONSTRATED THE FDP'S CHRONIC DILEMMA AS A SMALL PARTY AS WELL AS ITS SHARP INTERNAL DIVISION. FOR WERNER KLUMPP IT IS A LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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DEFINITE VICTORY WHICH HAS FURTHER STRENGTHENED HIS POSITION LOCALLY AND ENHANCED HIS NATIONAL REPUTATION. THE OUTCOME OF THE COALITION DISCUSSIONS IS ALMOST CERTAIN TO RESULT IN AGREEMENT FOR A CDU/FDP COALITION ON THE SAAR EVEN THOUGH A GOOD DEAL OF BARGAINING MAY PRECEDE IT. THE FACT, HOWEVER, IS THAT BOTH CDU MINISTER-PRESIDENT ROEDER AND THE FDP NOW WANT THIS COALITION. THE SPLIT BETWEEN THE CDU AND THE

CSU WILL MAKE IT EASIER FOR THE CDU PARTNER IN  
THESE NEGOTIATIONS TO BE FORTHCOMING TO THE FDP'S  
DEMANDS AND THE FDP HAVING WON THE INTERNAL STRUGGLE  
WITH A SUBSTANTIAL PART OF ITS OWN MEMBERSHIP IS  
NSTAGE.LEHMANN

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